Church Concerns Regarding the "Gay Rights" Issue

Background: Threat to Churches

The church community in the United States has played a critical role in protecting and expanding civil rights for qualified minorities. As a result, Americans of diverse ethnic origin now enjoy a greater level of economic opportunity and religious liberty than ever before. In turn, employers, employees, churches and church members benefit from the dynamics of ethnic diversity in the marketplace and their church homes.

However, a new definition of "minority" has crept into the civil rights arena during the last two decades. Seven states and more than 90 cities, counties and municipalities in America now prohibit discrimination based on "sexual orientation." By so doing, these government entities grant protected class status to a group of individuals whose identity is derived solely from their sexual behavior or desires — primarily homosexuals. These laws, which grant extraordinary status to what amounts to, not a true ethnic minority, but a **special interest group**, may adversely affect churches and church members in several ways. The following occurrences demonstrate how "gay rights" laws threaten to coerce acceptance of homosexuality by those (including churches and their members) who may conscientiously disapprove of that lifestyle.

* When Wisconsin's former Governor Lee Sherman Dreyfus signed into law that state's "gay rights" bill, he was assured that the bill would have no effect on religious institutions like the 40-year-old Rawhide Boys' Ranch, a Christian home for troubled boys. Shortly after Dreyfus left office, two male homosexuals appeared at the Ranch, demanding to be hired as boys' counselors. Evidence has surfaced that a council on lesbian and gay issues **targeted the Ranch specifically for these gays' applications**. According to sources at Rawhide, heading off these conpiratorial plans cost the Ranch in excess of $30,000. Rawhide still has outstanding debts remaining from this episode.

* In Madison, Wisconsin, two women were reprimanded for not selecting a lesbian applicant as an apartment roommate by the Madison Equal Opportunities Commission (MEOC). After the MEOC interrogated the two roommates for 4-1/2 hours, they ordered the roommates to pay the lesbian $1,500. The roommates were also ordered to attend "sensitivity classes" to be taught by homosexuals, write a formal letter of apology and have their living situation monitored for two years.

* The Attorney General of Hawaii has stated that, under a state "gay rights" law, homosexuals must be considered for almost all positions in church employment except the pastorate itself.

* Under a "gay rights" ordinance, the Catholic Archdiocese of Minneapolis was recently fined $15,000 and assessed $20,000 in damages, payable to homosexuals who complained that the Archdiocese denied their club the "right" to meet in church-owned facilities.

* Here in Colorado, Gov. Roy Romer's Executive Order granting "sexual orientation" special status in state employment has led state agents to conduct "sensitivity training" about "gayness" for state employees. At the conclusion of the training sessions, employees were strongly urged, under conditions

(Over, please...)

of extreme peer pressure, to don and wear buttons declaring "It's O.K. to Be Gay." They were also urged to sign a form acknowledging their "imperfect attitudes toward gays and lesbians."

* The Boy Scouts in California have spent more than $1 million to defend the organization's right to exclude homosexuals from being Scoutmasters. Further, San Francisco United Way and Levi Strauss have cut off funds to the Scouts to protest their policy. Yet the Scouts in San Diego have been ordered to pay $78,000 to the family of an eight-year-old boy molested by his Scout leader. A nationwide 19-year investigation by the Boy Scouts of America found 1,151 complaints by Boy Scouts of abuse of boys by Scout leaders, in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. This makes, the investigation concluded, "sex abuse more common in Scouting than accidental death and serious injuries... In that time, at least 416 men have been arrested or banned from Scouting for molesting boys in their care." The Boy Scouts have spent millions of dollars on litigation related to this abuse.

* A 1992 New Jersey "gay rights" statute prohibits **all employers**, including churches, from discriminating on the basis of sexual orientation in their hiring and firing practices. The same law could force churches to unite homosexuals in marriage. The Orthodox Presbyterian Church has recently launched litigation against the statute (NAE Washington Insight, July, 1992).

* In 1989, homosexual "AIDS activists" invaded a Roman Catholic mass at New York City's St. Patrick's Cathedral, shouting obscenities and defiling Communion elements. Since homosexuals enjoy special protection under the city's "gay rights" legislation, it's not surprising that police response to this incident was negligible.

* On Saturday, November 16, 1991, a group of AIDS demonstrators dressed in suits and ties infiltrated a Family Concerns Conference brunch at First Baptist Church, Atlanta. They peppered attendees with hundreds of condoms while chanting "safer sex saves lives." Demonstrators were removed by church security guards and police, but **there were no arrests**.

* No charges have been filed or arrests made at the past two years' Gay and Lesbian Pride Parades in San Francisco. CFV has video footage of lewd and lascivious acts, including public fondling of genitalia and acts of what appears to be public anal sex; open promotion of pedophilia and savage ridicule of religious objects and symbols; clear evidence of police presence, plus footage of San Francisco's mayor, who rode in and endorsed these parades, marched in and attended by thousands, including children. Asked why no arrests were made, police authorities said their primary responsibility was to "reflect community standards and keep the peace."

* Homosexual activists' behavior at non-violent, pro-life protests has been violent and even obscene. A recent Los Angeles Times article (October 6, 1991) reported male and female homosexual "AIDS activists" spitting on and sticking needles into pro-life demonstrators, while others exposed their private parts to demonstrators in deliberate attempts to offend. No arrests were made.

* In Minneapolis, Big Brothers was prosecuted for merely telling one mother that a prospective Big Brother to her son was a homosexual. After years of legal harassment, Big Brothers has adopted a "national policy of accepting `gay' men as prospective Big Brothers to fatherless youths..."

* Constitutional attorneys estimate the cost of fighting charges filed under "gay rights" legislation to a Supreme Court decision as nearly $250,000.

While recognizing the threat "gay rights" laws present to the free speech, free assembly and firmly held convictions of people conscientiously opposing homosexual behaviors and political agendas, Christians must never forget our obligation to "hate the sin" of homosexuality, but "love the sinner." Therefore, Christians are under Christ's mandate to "go into **all** the world and preach the Gospel to **every** creature," including homosexuals and those whose lives their sin impacts...

Opportunities for Ministry to Homosexuals, and Their Families and Friends

CFV has been informed that the following organizations offer training, education, counseling and support groups to individuals experiencing conflict between their sexuality and their spirituality, and their families and friends. These organizations work through local church bodies to help bring healing and restoration to those engaged in destructive lifestyles characterized by sexual sin.

For Families and Friends of Homosexuals

Spatula Ministries
P.O. Box 444
La Habra, CA 90631
(213) 691-7369

DoveTail Ministries
5110 Golden Hills Court
Colorado Springs, CO 80919
(719) 548-0341

Where Grace Abounds
P.O. Box 18871
Denver, CO 80218
(303) 322-2027

For Former Homosexuals

Desert Stream
12488 Venice Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90066-3804
(213) 572-0140

DoveTail Ministries
5110 Golden Hills Court
Colorado Springs, CO 80919
(719) 548-0341

Where Grace Abounds
P.O. Box 18871
Denver, CO 80218
(303) 322-2027

Exodus International
P.O. Box 2121
San Rafael, CA 94912
(415) 454-1017

Paid for by Colorado for Family Values. Will Perkins, Executive Board Chairman, Kevin Tebedo, Director.

(Note: This listing does not constitute an endorsement by CFV of these ministries, nor does this listing imply endorsement by these ministries of Amendment 2 or the work of CFV. CFV encourages church pastors to make full inquiry about these ministries, to ascertain if, or how best, these ministries might interface with the work of their individual church fellowships.)